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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION ON WTO AND ARTICLE 98 AGREEMENT, OCTOBER
1, 2003

1. Editorial in Tegucigalpa-based moderate daily "El Herald" on 10/1 entitled "The U.S. and Its Stick and Carrot Policy". "The continuous implementation of the traditional stick and carrot policy by the U.S. in its external affairs has recently been evidenced by two events: the exoneration from penalties for four poor countries that signed agreements with Washington to guarantee the impunity of Americans responsible for crimes against humanity and the threats against Guatemala and Costa Rica for being members of the now-powerful G-22, the group of countries that are fighting in the WTO to eliminate agricultural subsidies."

"In regard to the boycott of the ICC, the White House had threatened to withhold military aid to 35 countries if they didn't sign an Article 98 agreement. Four of those countries: Honduras, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Georgia gave in, and this week Washington informed them that they had achieved their reward, their carrot."

"On the other hand, Guatemala and Costa Rica are being threatened with the Washington stick for having the nerve to be part of the G-22, a group that seeks more equitable trade among poor and rich countries. Obviously, the failure of the Cancun meeting has infuriated the U.S. and other rich countries that encountered a unified group of countries that aren't willing to be manipulated anymore. We hope that both countries remain with the G-22 because, as it was demonstrated in Cancun, the only option for the victims of agricultural subsidies is to remain united."

"We wonder how come Honduras, whose peasants would be severely affected competing with subsidized products from rich countries, is not a member of the G-22? We hope it's not because of the traditional preventive fear of our governmental authorities."

"In one way or another, the traditional stick and carrot policy is still yielding positive results, even though there is a worldwide cry against the unfairness of globalization."

Palmer